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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

Office of the Secretary

11 September 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
ATTENTION: Brig Gen George S. Brown
Military Assistant

Info Cys to:			
	OSD Dep	SAFRD	SAFMS (3)
	OSD Spec Asst	SAFFM	AFCCS
	ODDR&E (Dr. Brown)	SAFMA	AFCVC
	SAFS	SAFLL	AFCIN
	SAFUS	SAFOI	AFCVS-DSMG
			AFSDC-IN-1

SUBJECT: (U) SAMOS Launch Report

1. (U) SAMOS III (Atlas 106D/Agena 2120) exploded on pad number 1 at the PMR, Point Arguello Complex at approximately 1529 EDT, 9 Sep 61.

2. (S) Preliminary information indicates a malfunction in booster electrical system caused inadvertent engine shutdown approximately one second after lift-off. Missile settled back on pad after lifting approximately 2-3 feet and exploded. Initial pad damage report indicates all plumbing and wiring above ground destroyed; umbilical mast still standing, but structural integrity in doubt; launcher damaged, will probably require replacement; equipment rooms below pad appear to be relatively undamaged; gantry appears undamaged, although gantry crane is damaged slightly; Atlas booster and Agena second stage were completely destroyed. Pad #2 of the launch complex was undamaged. Investigation to determine exact cause of failure is continuing.

DOWNGRADED AT 12 YEAR INTERVALS;
NOT AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED
DOD DIR. 5200.10

[redacted]

for [redacted]
Brigadier General, USAF
Director, Office of Missile
& Satellite Systems

DS 61-4327-A/9

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